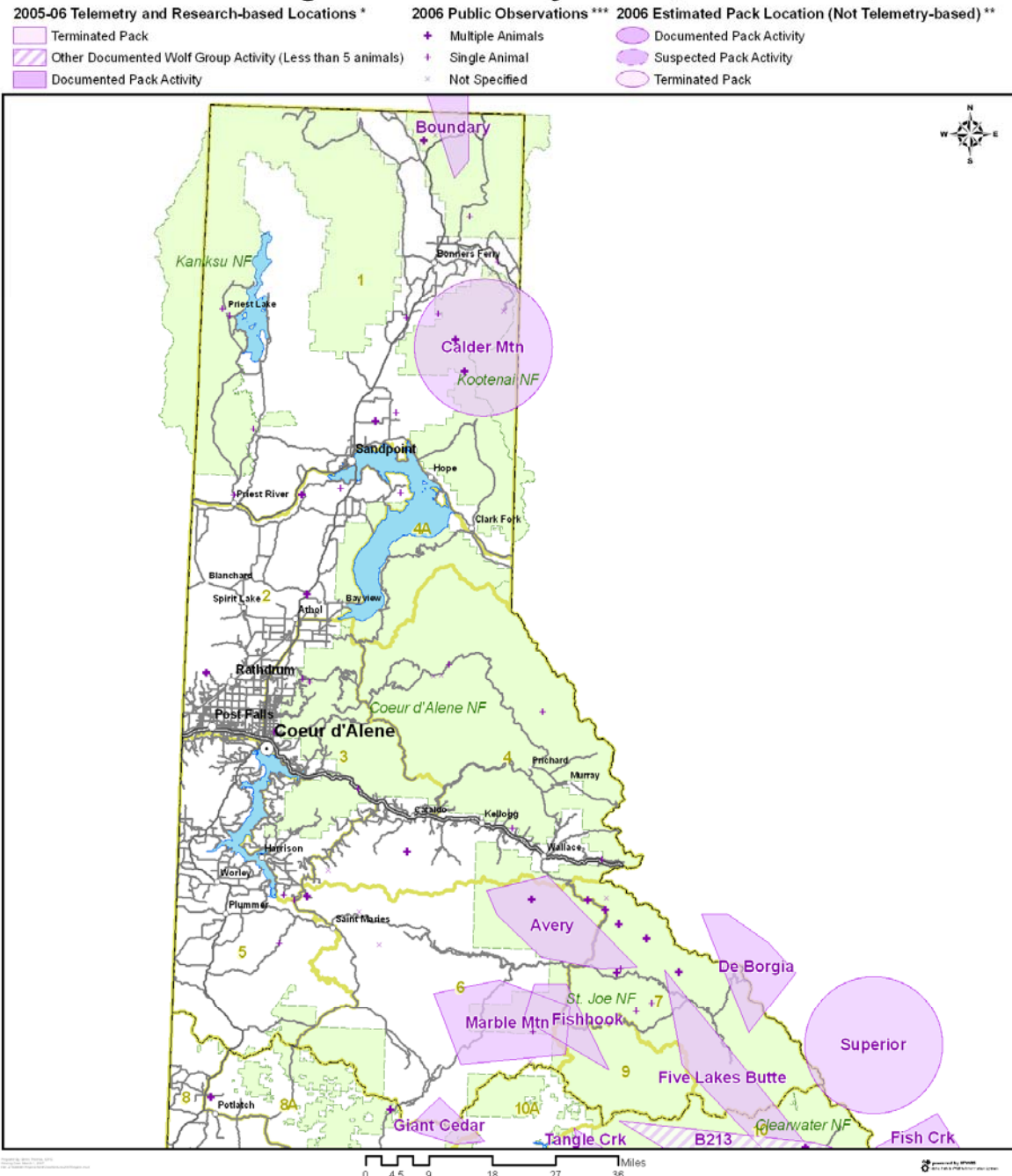


## 2006 Panhandle Region Wolf Activity

Telemetry, Documented and Suspected Locations



\* Telemetry data and research locations collected and analyzed by Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the Nez Perce Tribe, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the National Park Service. Pack locations are minimum convex polygons of telemetry and research observations for radio-collared wolves from 1/1/2005 - 12/31/2006 with outliers removed. Packs which did not exist in 2006 are excluded. This map is provided for management purposes and should not be used for data analysis. Do not release these data to third parties without first contacting the Idaho Department of Fish and Game or the Nez Perce Tribe.

\*\* Estimated Pack Activity determined by biologists from research locations, public observations and incidental observations from 1/1/2005 - 12/31/2006.  
\*\*\* Public Observations from 1/1/2005 - 12/31/2006 collected on the Idaho Fish and Game website and reviewed by staff biologists.

Map Produced by Idaho Fish and Wildlife Information System, Idaho Fish and Game in cooperation with: The Nez Perce Tribe, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, USDA APHIS Wildlife Services, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, and the National Park Service

Figure 6. Wolf pack activity and observations in the Panhandle Region, 2006.

Table 2. Estimated pack size, reproductive status, mortality, dispersal, monitoring status, and livestock depredation for documented and suspected wolf packs within Idaho Department of Fish and Game Panhandle Region, 2006.

Wolf pack or group	Reproductive status					Documented mortalities					Monitoring status			Confirmed & probable wolf-caused livestock losses		
	Min. no. wolves detected <sup>a</sup>	Min. no. pups prod.	Reported as reprod. packs	Reported as breeding pairs <sup>b</sup>	Natural	Control <sup>c</sup>	Other		Known dispersal	Active radio collars	Number wolves captured <sup>f</sup>	Number wolves missing <sup>g</sup>	Cattle	Sheep	Dogs	
							human <sup>d</sup>	Unknown <sup>e</sup>								
Documented pack																
Avery	10	2	yes	yes	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	
Boundary ( ID) <sup>h</sup>	1	?	no	no	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	
Calder Mtn (ID) <sup>h</sup>	4	4	yes	yes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
De Borgia (MT) <sup>h</sup>																
Fishhook	6	2	yes	no	0	0	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	
Five Lakes Butte	3	?	no	no	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	
Marble Mountain	6	3	yes	yes	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	
Superior (MT) <sup>h</sup>																
Tangle Creek	5	3	yes	yes	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	
Regional total	35	14			0	0	1	1	1	8	8	0	0	0	0	

<sup>a</sup> Number of wolves detected by wolf program personnel through observations of wolves or wolf sign and believed alive at end of 2006. Unknown status denoted by “?” Sum of this column does not equate to number of wolves estimated to be present in the population.

<sup>b</sup> Breeding pairs are the measure of Federal and State wolf recovery and management goals. A breeding pair is defined as “an adult male and an adult female wolf that have produced at least 2 pups that survive until December 31 of the year of their birth...”.

<sup>c</sup> Includes agency lethal control and legal take.

<sup>d</sup> Includes all other human-related deaths.

<sup>e</sup> Does not include pups that disappeared before winter.

<sup>f</sup> Includes all wolves captured during 2006. Most, but not all, were radiocollared.

<sup>g</sup> Radiocollared wolves that became missing in 2006.

<sup>h</sup> Border pack officially tallied to (state/nation); territory known or likely shared with Idaho. Data on these packs can be found in Rocky Mountain Wolf Recovery 2006 Interagency Annual Report.

## Clearwater Region

The Clearwater Region was occupied by 21 documented resident, 4 documented border (including 2 tallied for Idaho [Fish Creek and Brooks Creek] and 2 for Montana [Big Hole and Lake Como]), and 1 suspected pack (Figure 7; Table 3). Twelve of the 15 Idaho (excluding Big Hole, see above) packs documented to have reproduced qualified as breeding pairs. For the 3 packs that did not qualify as breeding pairs, only 1 pup was observed for Lochsa pack, only 1 pup survived for Red River pack, and no pup count could be obtained for the Selway pack (although reproduction was confirmed as 1+ pups based on pup sign). Six wolf mortalities were recorded; 3 from illegal take, 2 by unknown causes, and 1 from natural cause. Livestock losses in the Clearwater Region during 2006 included 1 confirmed and 3 probable wolf-killed cattle. The White Bird Creek pack was responsible for the loss of 2 hunting hounds (and injured a third) and unknown wolves killed a hound near Weippe, Idaho, in 2006. Eleven wolves were captured and fitted with radiocollars in the region.

### Law Enforcement Summary

Regional Conservation Officers, in consultation with USFWS Special Agents, investigated 1 incident involving a dead wolf. The wolf was determined to have been illegally killed and was reported to the USFWS for further investigation.

### Documented Resident Packs

#### *Bimerick Meadow*

Monitoring male B247, suspected alpha, and newly radiocollared female B289 led biologists to a rendezvous site where 6 gray pups were observed in late August 2006. Minimum pack size, based upon an aerial observation, was estimated at 7 wolves. This pack was a breeding pair in 2006 for the second consecutive year.

#### *Chesimia*

After lethal control removed the alpha female and 3 other wolves in 2005, this pack did not display denning behavior in 2006 as indicated by telemetry locations of sole radiocollared wolf, yearling female B222. In addition, the livestock operator in this pack's territory noted significantly less evidence of wolves in 2006 near his cow camp, located in close proximity to the 2005 den site. Monthly aerial locations for B222 in August and September suggested that she might be dispersing, as they were outside of the pack's defined home range. B222 was not located during the October 2006 monitoring flight, but was found on the western edge of their territory in early December 2006. Four gray wolves, including B222, were observed in late December during a monitoring flight. The Chesimia pack was not considered a breeding pair for 2006.

#### *Cold Springs*

Following the death of the alpha female, B206, in October 2005, there were no radiocollared individuals in this pack. Multiple investigations of areas previously used by this pack failed to detect evidence of wolf activity. The southernmost aerial telemetry location for B206, from May 2005, was approximately 8 miles (13 km) northeast of the Lick Creek pack's 2006 rendezvous site, suggesting the possibility that these 2 packs were one and the same, and that the Cold Springs pack had shifted south during 2006. Further aerial telemetry data will be needed to

determine pack identities in this area of potential overlap. The Cold Springs pack was not a breeding pair for 2006.

#### *Coolwater Ridge*

The suspected alpha male of this pack, B286, was captured in June 2006. The alpha female, B163, was also radiocollared. Two black pups were observed and 2 others were heard howling at a rendezvous site in late June. A hunter illegally shot B286 in October 2006, possibly impacting this pack's capacity to reproduce in 2007. Field observations (official count) indicated a minimum pack size of 6 individuals, although an observation from the public during hunting season, following the death of B286, suggested that this pack contained 7-12 individuals. Despite the loss of the suspected alpha male, the Coolwater Ridge pack was a breeding pair in 2006.

#### *Eagle Mountain*

Alpha male B136 and his uncollared mate produced their fourth litter of pups in 2006. A minimum of 3 pups was observed in late July in a tributary of the Lochsa River. Because B136 was the sole radiocollared wolf and the collar was expected to expire soon, a capture effort was initiated in early August. Facilitated by a USFS horse packer, a program biologist trapped and radiocollared a young adult female, B295. During the October 2006 monitoring flight, B136 and B295 were located approximately 8 miles (13 km) southeast of the previously defined territorial boundary, in the North Fork of Moose Creek; it was not known if this represented an extraterritorial movement or whether this area was indeed part of the pack's home range. Pack size for 2006 was estimated at a minimum of 10, including 2 black individuals (no documentation of black wolves previously), based upon an aerial observation. This pack was a breeding pair for 2006.

#### *Earthquake Basin*

Two subadult female wolves were captured and radiocollared from this previously uncollared pack in early May 2006. Radio tracking of B274 and B275 subsequently led biologists to a rendezvous site where 5 black and 4 gray pups were observed, the largest litter recorded for 2006. Based upon field observations, this pack was estimated to contain a minimum of 13 wolves. The Earthquake Basin pack was a breeding pair for 2006.

#### *Eldorado Creek*

Trapping operations during summer led to the capture and radiocollaring of 2 wolves; adult male B281 and possible alpha female B301. Based upon howling, a minimum of 3 pups was detected. Aerial observations indicated a minimum of 5 wolves in this pack. The Eldorado Creek pack was a breeding pair for 2006.

#### *Florence*

Two of 3 radiocollared male wolves captured from this pack in 2004, B200 and B201, remained with the pack during 2006. The third, B202, either dispersed or his radiocollar failed, as he was not located after March 2005. Investigations of the den site in early June documented the presence of 4 gray pups. A domestic cow was listed as a probable wolf-kill in this pack's territory. Based upon field observations, a minimum of 7 wolves was present, although aerial sightings in both 2004 and 2005 revealed 15 individuals. Breeding pair status was retained by the Florence pack for 2006.

### *Giant Cedar*

Although Giant Cedar was a suspected pack in 2005, subsequent monitoring of female wolf B256, radiocollared in 2005, allowed biologists to reclassify this group as a documented pack for 2006. Localized radiolocations during spring indicated probable denning. In early June, a single pup was heard howling in the vicinity of the suspected den site. The wolves moved away from the area following this detection, allowing biologists to locate the actual den structure, which happened to be a “giant” cedar log. Three more field efforts were required before a pup count was obtained in late August, at which time 3 gray pups were seen. Two of them, a male (B307) and female (B308), were subsequently captured and fitted with radiocollars. Pack size was estimated at a minimum of 6 individuals. The aptly named Giant Cedar pack was a breeding pair in 2006.

### *Gospel Hump*

Contact with both radiocollared wolves, females B138 and B139, was lost during 2004, making monitoring of this pack difficult. Program personnel received reports during May, via a contract trail crew working for the USFS in the Gospel Hump Wilderness, of persistent howling and wolf sign in the vicinity of the pack’s most recently known den site. Before the program could mount a survey effort, additional reports from the trail crew indicated that the wolves had probably left the area as no further howling was heard. No other reports were received and limited efforts failed to locate the pack. The Gospel Hump pack was not a breeding pair in 2006 and there was no estimate of pack size.

### *Hemlock Ridge*

This pack produced its fourth documented litter in 2006. Based upon howling, a minimum of 2 pups was detected. Because of dense vegetation at the rendezvous site, program personnel observed no pups, but a fisheries biologist for Idaho Department of Lands reported seeing 2 gray pups and was able to photograph one. In addition, at least 4 adults were accounted for based upon radiocollared animals and howling that resulted in a minimum pack size estimate of 6 wolves for 2006. An aerial observation indicated the first presence of a black wolf in this pack. The Hemlock Ridge pack was a breeding pair for 2006.

### *Indian Creek*

Five wolves were observed in this drainage during a winter ungulate survey conducted by IDFG in 2004, so this group was retroactively added as a documented pack for 2004. No reports of wolf activity were received in 2006. This pack was not considered a breeding pair and there was no estimate of pack size for 2006.

### *Kelly Creek*

Three wolves, suspected alpha male B220 along with females B237 and B238, were present at a traditional rendezvous site in early August. Three gray pups were observed and a fourth was suspected based upon howling. Thirteen wolves were seen during a monitoring flight in December 2006, which did not include B238, whose membership in the pack was uncertain (she was not located with B220 or B237 after 1 August 2006 and had shifted west a few miles). The longstanding Kelly Creek pack was a breeding pair in 2006.

### *Lochsa*

Radiocollared female wolf B232 led biologists to a rendezvous site in mid-August, where she was observed with 3-4 other gray adult-sized wolves and a single gray pup. There may have been additional pups, although group howls heard by project personnel did not support that

assumption. A trapping effort resulted in 2 wolf captures, but both pulled out of the traps; 1 escaped as it was approached to be sedated. Pack size was estimated at a minimum of 5-6 individuals in 2006 based upon field observations. An aerial observation of 9 gray wolves in December 2006 provided the official pack size count. The Lochsa pack was not a breeding pair for 2006.

#### *Magruder*

Suspected alpha male B110 had not been located since June 2004, probably due to expiration of his radiocollar, and female B219 not since late May 2005. One effort to investigate this uncollared pack's previously used rendezvous sites was made, but no wolf sign was found. Reports from backpackers and hunters in the area indicated that wolves were still residing within the home range. The Magruder pack was not a breeding pair in 2006 and there was no estimate of pack size.

#### *O'Hara Point*

Suspected alpha male B111 had not been located since October 2004, and it was likely his radiocollar expired. Male B162, captured as a pup in 2003, dispersed by mid-May 2005, leaving no radiocollared wolves in this pack. The pack did not use their traditional denning area in 2006, complicating efforts to document reproduction and conduct capture operations. Tracks of multiple wolves were found by biologists, confirming the continued presence of wolves in the territory. Also, wolves were confirmed to have injured 2 adult cows and 1 calf and probably killed 1 calf in this pack's territory in late August. B111's radiocollar was found by a hunter during November 2006, likely indicative of this wolf's death. The O'Hara Point pack was not a breeding pair in 2006.

#### *Pettibone Creek*

Six wolves were observed in this drainage during a winter ungulate survey conducted by IDFG in 2004, so this group was retroactively added as a documented pack for 2004. No estimate of pack size was made and no evidence of reproduction was obtained, so this pack was not a breeding pair for 2006.

#### *Pot Mountain*

Five wolves were observed on the flank of Pot Mountain during a winter ungulate survey conducted by IDFG in spring 2005, so this group was added as a documented pack for 2005. Field efforts in 2006 were unsuccessful in locating these wolves as very limited wolf sign was detected in the area. No estimate of pack size was made and no evidence of reproduction was obtained, so this pack was not a breeding pair for 2006.

#### *Red River*

No radiocollared wolves were monitored during 2006. In mid-July, a single black pup was observed along Red River south of the Red River Wildlife Management Area. The following day, 1-2 pups responded to howling. The presence of pups initiated a capture operation, despite the lack of adult wolf sign observed in the area. This trapping session and a subsequent one was unsuccessful, so this pack remained without a radiocollared member. A dead wolf was reported to program personnel in early October; a gray pup was recovered in the South Fork of Red River drainage and USFWS Law Enforcement initiated an investigation. Sightings of 8-10 wolves observed at Red River Wildlife Management Area were received in early fall. The Red River pack was not considered a breeding pair for 2006.

### *Selway*

Monitoring efforts in 2006 included 3 investigations of previously used rendezvous sites. Tracks of 4 wolves were located in the Meadow Creek drainage in late September, and hunters reported hearing multiple wolves howling the night these tracks were discovered. Copious pup scats were located the following day at a previously identified rendezvous site in the Bargamin Creek drainage; no evidence of wolf use was previously detected at this site in mid-July, indicating the pack occupied the area between mid-July and mid-September. The Selway pack was counted as a reproductive pack (officially tallied as 1+ pups based on sign observed), but not a breeding pair in 2006 because a minimum of 2 pups was not documented.

### *White Bird Creek*

Alpha female B284 and adult male B285 were captured and radiocollared following an incident between this pack and hunting dogs. Three wolves killed 2 hounds and injured a third when the wolves encountered the dogs in late May 2006. A program biologist subsequently located the pack's rendezvous site, leading to the successful trapping effort. A minimum of 2 pups and 3 adults was detected at that time, based upon howling. This pack was also implicated in a probable wolf-killed cattle loss and the probable wounding of another. One wolf was documented as an illegal kill in November. Six wolves were observed during a monitoring flight during winter 2006/2007. The newly documented White Bird Creek pack was a breeding pair for 2006.

### Documented Border Packs

#### *Big Hole (MT)*

Because they denned in Montana, and the majority of their locations were there as well, the Big Hole pack was officially counted as a Montana pack in 2006 for the second consecutive year (fieldwork was conducted by NPT personnel in coordination with MTFWP). The pack produced 2 black and 2 gray pups. Estimated pack size at the end of 2006 was 6 wolves based on an aerial sighting from July. The sole radiocollared wolf, female B151, remained with the pack. This pack qualified as a breeding pair for Montana in 2006.

#### *Brooks Creek*

A radiocollar was placed on a wolf, SW17M, in this drainage in spring 2005 by an MTFWP biologist. Based upon telemetry locations obtained during spring 2006, MTFWP personnel believed this pack denned in the White Sand Creek drainage of Idaho. During a monitoring flight in July, an MTFWP biologist observed 4 black and 2 gray pups. Minimum pack size was estimated at 9 wolves based upon a ground observation in October. Counted as a breeding pair for Montana in 2005, this border pack was tallied as a breeding pair for Idaho in 2006 due to its suspected den location.

#### *Fish Creek*

The Fish Creek pack denned in Idaho on the Clearwater National Forest in 2006; their previous den was in Montana in 2005. During a monitoring flight conducted by MTFWP in August 2006, 7 pups were observed. In November, 14 wolves were seen during a monitoring flight. This border pack was considered an Idaho breeding pair for 2006.

#### *Lake Como (MT)*

A minimum of 3 wolves was present in this area, as documented by MTFWP, but none were radiocollared. No evidence of reproduction was obtained in 2006. Pups were last known to be

produced in the Lake Como pack in 2002. Very little was known about wolf activity in this area from 2002 to present and this pack, tallied for Montana, was not a breeding pair in 2006.

### Suspected Resident Packs

#### *Grandad*

Investigation of the area where an outfitter, in May 2005, reported 6 wolf pups and program biologists observed 3 gray adults, yielded little evidence of wolf use in 2006. The livestock manager in the area reported that he had seen less wolf sign in 2006 than the 2 preceding years, suggesting either a reduced level of wolf activity or those wolves had shifted use to another area. Video of a wolf was taken in mid-June near Flannery Creek, a tributary of Washington Creek, approximately 12 miles (19 km) from where 3 wolves were observed in 2005. An extensive survey of the heavily roaded area yielded minimal wolf sign. A prolonged survey/trapping effort during the latter half of August detected 4 sets of wolf tracks and a wolf capture; however, the wolf escaped by pulling out of the trap. Wolf presence was confirmed, but pack and reproductive status were not verified during 2006.

### Other Documented Wolf Groups

#### *B147*

After dispersing from the Jureano Mountain pack, female B147 resided in what would be the White Bird Creek pack's territory (although their range was not well understood at the time due to limited number of locations) from May 2004 until she crossed the South Fork Clearwater River in spring 2006. She was later located in Earthquake Basin, home to the pack of that name. While conducting a capture effort for the Earthquake Basin pack, biologists detected B147's radio signal on mortality mode in May 2006 and discovered her carcass. Necropsy results determined that her death was due to natural causes, osteosarcoma and terminal sepsis.

#### *B213*

Female B213, radiocollared as an adult in the Five Lakes Butte pack in 2004, was last located within this pack's territory in September 2005. Her signal was not detected again until January 2006 when she was located in the Kelly Creek drainage, within the Fish Creek pack's territory. B213 continued her extraterritorial wanderings, when she was located near Lolo Hot Springs (Big Hole pack's home range) and Scurvy Mountain (home to Paradise/Scurvy/Gorman/Toboggan area of suspected wolf activity); she then returned to Five Lakes Butte pack's home range in May 2006. She was not located with the other radiocollared wolf in that pack, B212, throughout 2006. Her pack membership and social status was uncertain at the end of 2006, although she was observed with 2 other wolves in the North Fork Clearwater River drainage in December 2006.

#### *B238*

Female B238's affiliation to the Kelly Creek pack seemed to have ended in August 2006. She was present at the pack's rendezvous site, along with B220 and B237 in August 2006, but during the next monitoring flight (mid-August 2006), she was located apart from her radiocollared pack mates and was not located with them for the rest of 2006. From August through November, she seemed to have settled in the interstice between the Kelly Creek and Eldorado Creek packs' territories. In mid-December, B238 was seen scent-marking within the Eldorado Creek pack's territory, possibly attempting to join that pack or usurp a portion of their territory. Further observations will be required to determine B238's status.



*B258*

Female B258, sole radiocollared individual in the Eldorado Creek pack at the end of 2005, dispersed from her territory, and in January was found approximately 34 miles (55 km) northwest of her December 2005 aerial location. B258 was located again in April west of Elk River, approximately 41 miles (65 km) from this pack's home range; she has not been detected since.